



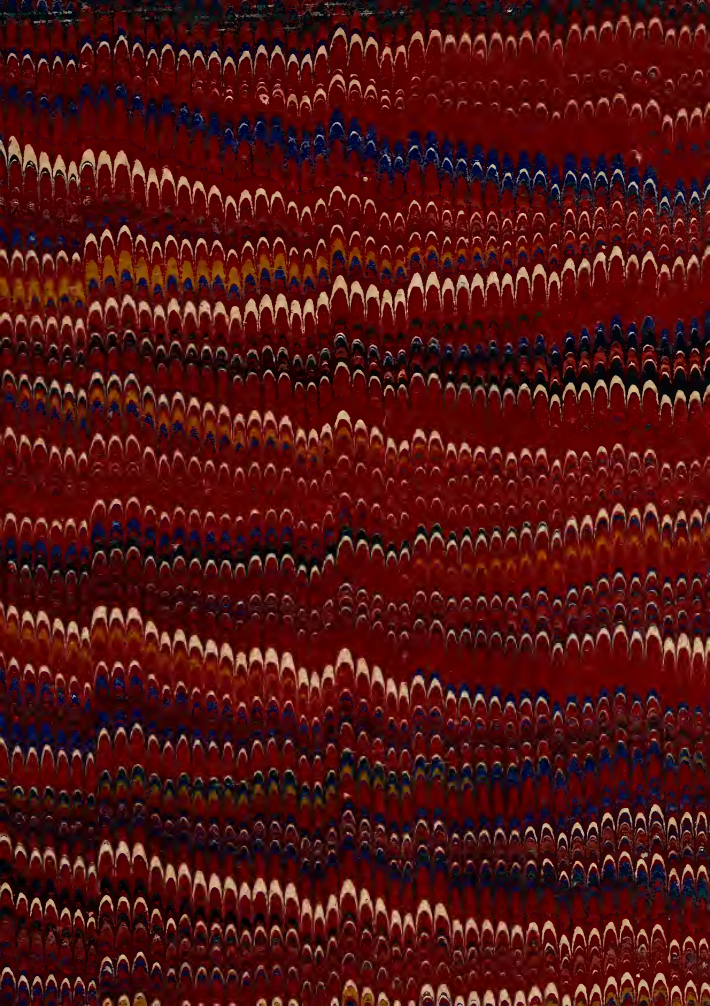
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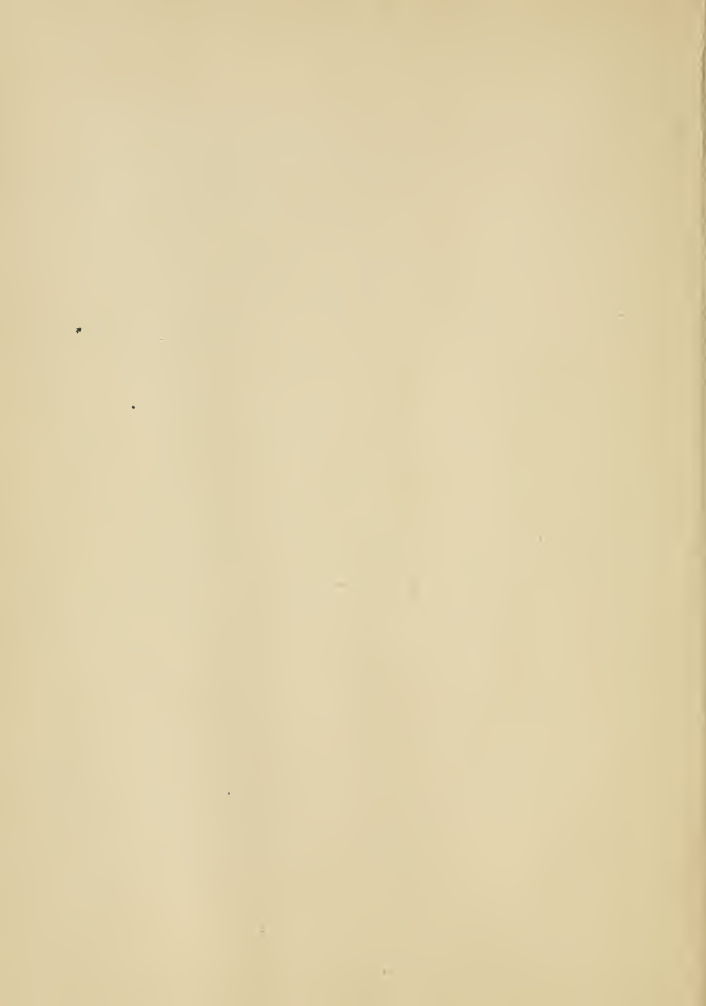
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1854

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.







An Idgl of Old Virginia.



Marcus Blakey Allmonrd, A. M.

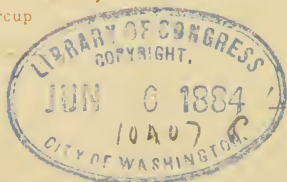
ESTELLE:

AN IDYL OF OLD VIRGINIA.

MARCUS BLAKEY ALMOND, A.M.,

Professor of Ancient Languages, Male High School, Louisville, Ky.

On books will often make us dream
And June will bring fair fancies up
And tinge them with the mellow gleam
Of daffodil and buttercup



JOHN P. MORRISON AND COMPANY, LOUISVILLE, KY.

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1884

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Dedicated to the Boys

OF THE

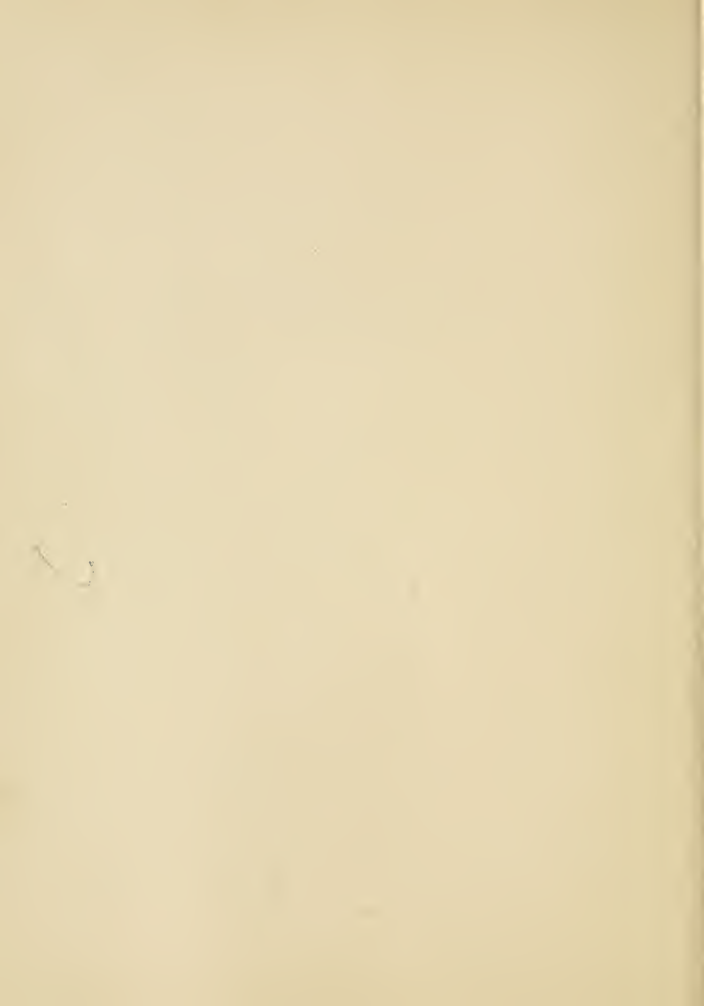
MALE HIGH SCHOOL.





MY FRIENDS:

You know what a delightful session we have just had, how harmoniously we have worked together, how bravely you have seconded my every effort, and how gladly I have exerted myself to give you a broader and a better view of life. At several meetings of your Literary Society I have been present and have concluded my remarks by reciting a few hurried lines in verse, either inciting you to higher notions of personal honor or in condolence for our dead. So appreciative were you of these verses, and so frequently since have I been asked by you to publish my "poems," that I feel constrained to dedicate this humble effort to you, believing that you, at least, who have my heart, will accord



them your approval, however it may be with that outer world. You know a teacher's trials, you know the circumstances that have surrounded me during the composition of this little Idyl—that but bits of time, odds and ends of moments, were at my disposal, and that it is rather a spontaneous than a labored effort. For what it is worth, I know that you will take it. For what it is worth you shall have it, and, with it, the hope that you and I shall always keep our hearts young and pure and sweet and ever appreciative of Nature in all her phases and God in all his excellence, no matter what that outer and busier but not more earnest and sincere or wisely productive world may think. We build but slowly, but we build for all time.

Sincerely yours,

MARCUS B. ALLMOND.

ESTELLE.

IN that fair land of light and love,
Where heroes sleep entombed in throngs,
Where laughing skies are blue above
And Nature sings her sweetest songs—
In that dear land we love and hold
The saintliest of the sisterhood—
The State of States, whose arms enfold
Yet hosts on hosts of great and good,
Whose virgin soil bears virgin name,
Whose best of people wear the grace
Of heirship in their fathers' fame
With ease that marks a kindred race,

Whose men love honor as their soul,
And women are Cornelias all,
Who count their jewels by the roll
Of sons who heed their country's call;—
Close nestling under mountains blue
A streamlet rises in a glen
And makes its way to broader view
Amid the busier haunts of men;
But ere it leaves its mountain home
It laughs along fair sloping hills
And catches with its whiter foam
The ripples of unnumbered rills.
It passes houses, one by one,
That, nestling 'mid their groves of trees,
Escape the noon-heat of the sun
When plays the fitful summer breeze.
It passes scenes that would delight
The painter's or the poet's eye—

That breathe anew by day, by night,
The glories of an Arcady.

Here in the month of leafy June,
When roses were in height of pride,
And Morning met sweet Afternoon
And kissed her by the water's side,
The farmer's daughter sat beneath
The freshness of the maple's shade,
While wild flowers of her native heath
The balmy airs with fragrance lade.

She caught the lull of noontide hour
And almost drowsed beside the fell;
The bee had left the rifled flower,
The sheep had ceased to ring his bell;
The browsing kine forgot to graze
And stood beneath the trees in dream,



While sunlight flashed its mellow rays
Upon the bosom of the stream.

The book beside her lay half-shut,
She floated off on magic seas :

“ He comes,” she dreams, “ he comes ; but, but—”

Her hair is fingered by the breeze,
Ah, well ! those lashes, they are long
And cast their shadows o’er the blue
That now lies hidden (am I wrong ?)

Beneath those lids, just out of view ;
And, oh ! those cheeks, I know a rose
Has stolen from its parent-stem

And left the track of tiny toes

In dimples upon each of them ;
And lips, Carnation’s own they seem—

Sweet, dainty lips, the home of bliss—,
Such lips as Fancy, in sweet dream,
Would hover round, yet fear to kiss ;

So pure, they seem for angel-words
The trysting-place and holy shrine,
When with the twitter, as of birds,
In nuptial joy they intertwine ;
And, oh ! that chin so neatly turned,
A Grecian artist, yes, the best,
With silent envy would have burned
To see the skill it did attest ;
And brow ! it rose a wreath of white
That bordered wide a wealth of tress
That now in sunny beauty light
Fell in fair folds upon her dress.
The wanton breeze with lustful glow
Now freshened as it stroked her hair,
And, as it kissed her brow of snow,
Declared she was surpassing fair.

She dreamed she saw him on the hill ;
She saw him moving down the path ;

She saw him cross the little rill ;
What eyes she dreams her lover hath !
How stately is his form, and fair !
How strong his step and sure of place !
How wavy his Hyperion hair,
And what an open, manly face !
But books will often make us dream,
And June will bring fair fancies up
And tinge them with the mellow gleam
Of daffodil or buttercup.

NOW farmer Creal, a neighbor friend,
While horses to the barn were gone,
Thought it quite well to go (not send)
And see how farmer Rout came on.
Just at his neighbor's gate he met,
A full fourth-mile from house away,
A youth quite fair of mould, who yet

Bore signs of traveling far that day.
Clad in a garb of sober sense,
He seemed to farmer Creal a man
He might address without pretense
Or taking length of time to scan.
“Good-morning!” said the farmer then;
“Good-morning!” said the passer-by.
“Nice day!” the farmer said again;
“Yes, sir,” the youth made quick reply,
And added, “Can you tell me, sir,
Where farmer Creal lives hereabout?
Or, if he is not living here,
Where lives—let’s see—old farmer Rout?”
“My name is Creal; and yonder—see!
Lives my old friend, good farmer Rout;
I’ll take you by his house with me,
If you will only turn about.”
Then through the gate and down the hill
They kept the way that led below,

And chatting, now they cross the rill

And reach the spot where maples grow.

And here, O stay! ye gods above,

An Aphrodité, armed in might,

A sunny snare of sunny Love,

Breaks in full power upon the sight.

“ Estelle’s asleep!” the farmer says,

And called her: “ Estelle, hey, awake!”

Oh! farmers have such sober ways—

His ringing words the sweet spell break.

But farmers are the sturdy men

That build the nation strong and true,

That sink foundations in the fen

On which we round up to the blue

The house that winds and rains harm not,

The superstructure that must stand,

When you and I are both forgot

And children’s children own the land.

NOW days went by, as days will do,
And oft they met, as young folks will,
When air is sweet and skies are blue
And green grass creeps along the hill.
'T was afternoon—just such a one
As June will give beneath the skies,
Where Blue Ridge welcomes morning sun
With her fair, laughing, ocean eyes.
They strolled—Estelle and Ned Holway—
Along the farm-road up the hill
To where the forest-shadows lay
In hushed repose, divinely still.
He talked in low and quiet wise
Of men and matters manifold,
And sigh'd to think the very skies
Grow brighter if but tinged with gold.
He told the story of his life—
Of all he dreamed that he would be;

"I've battled there ('twas knife to knife)
 To win an honest victory.
 But gold, eternal gold! the cry
 Fills all the world and stays the hand
 Of Art, who shrinks back with a sigh
 That greed of gain engulfs the land:
 But Art is Art—a thing divine—
 I love her with my very soul;
 I'll not forsake her holy shrine
 Till Mammon pay her ample dole."

They now had reached a charming spot,
 Where shade locked hands with shade in glee,
 The artist for a while forgot
 The subject of his colloquy.
 And now upon a great, wild rock
 Extending each way many feet,
 He piled stone-block upon stone-block
 Until it grew to be a seat

A very queen might love to hold,
 Beneath the overshadowing trees,
And wrapped in vine-leaves crimson-gold,
 Or green as hills by Southern seas.
A honeysuckle wild and red
 Was stretching welcoming hands to them.
A sudden thought now seized on Ned
 To weave for her a diadem.
The violet with blue eyes smiled
 From hiding-place beneath the ledge,
And buttercups were growing wild
 Beyond the sweeping forest's edge.
Now as he wove, he sprang again
 The subject of an artist's love—
How field and forest, grove and glen,
 And laughing rills and skies above,
And all things whisper songs to him,
 And all things seem to woo his heart
To quaff the cup whose mantling brim

Speaks loyalty to higher art.

“Men’s worlds are what they make them—all—

Or bright or dark or sweet or sad.

Whose heart lets sunshine on it fall

Or rain-clouds round it battle mad

Has joy or grief as he may choose—

Has wealth no Cræsus ever knew

Or Poverty that would refuse

To see the kindness men may do.

For my part I am sworn to seek

The beauty of God’s master-hand ;

My art, my tongue, my all shall speak

The glories of my native land.”

And thus he prattled, while a breeze

Began to stir on hidden wings ;

It hummed a low song in the trees

And toyed with her bonnet-strings.

The Song of the Breeze.

O sweet sun-bonnet, lined with pink !

When June wakes fancies in a youth,
The queenliest bonnet thou, I think,
That ever circled face of Truth.

O, sweet sun-bonnet, lined with pink !

O, sweet, fair face just peeping out !
Your dual power would woo, I think,
And win a heart's last halting doubt.


O, sweet sun-bonnet, lined with pink !

In whose fair fashion is no art,
But artless art which is, I think,
The art of arts to win a heart.

O, sweet sun-bonnet, lined with pink !

Thou art so witching in thy grace,
I read thy rosy light, I think,
Reflected on her lily-face.

Anon she threw it from her brow
And almost smiled as, looking down,
She saw the artist busy now
At work upon her floral crown.
“He weaves most well,” she thought, “but, oh!
He knows not what he’s weaving there,
Two lives—” and then she started so
Her thought was cleft like brittle ware.
Again she looked upon the crown,
Again the thought would come, but she
Would struggle so to keep it down—
“It might, it might be destiny.”
And he wove on and talked of art,
And talked of dreams (we all dream them),
And knew not that he wove his heart
Into his lady’s diadem.

H! summer speeds on fairy wings,
When youth with youth is leagued in Joy;
And Time counts not the half he brings,
When tricked in song he plays the boy,
And with round laugh and roguish glee
Steals smiles from even wrinkled cheeks,
And leads the foot of infancy
To wade unseen in neighboring creeks;
But oh! when sorrow comes between,
When Grief reclines with pallid brow,
That which was only yestere'en
Seems ages to both young hearts now.
Oh! wide world o'er, where is the place
That Death rules not with ruthless sway?
That old, old friend, whose pale, pale face
Will meet us in some unknown way.
Good farmer Rout in God's own time
Was called to leave his work and go;

His death you would not call sublime.

His life was? You would answer, "No."
But silent lives like his, you know,

Are like the silent work of God,
They teach the grain to sprout and grow,
They lead the grass on rod by rod
O'er fields where mother Earth lies bare,
Rough-torn by hand of man or time;
And thus they heal the wounds those wear,
And are more blest than if sublime.

Now, standing at the open grave,
The artist felt a sorrow new;
He could not tell what 't was that gave
Such sympathy as thrilled him through.
He knew a few more days, and then
His duty called him back to where
He laid aside his work to gain
A needed rest and wholesome air;


And yet there stirred within his heart
A tenderness he never owned,
When yonder form seemed reft apart
By silent grief that inly moaned.
A noble impulse rose and said—
(Ah, well! we'll not repeat it here).
Ambition lifted up her head;
The impulse shrank away in fear.




FEW days more, and then by chance
He passed the gate that led within
To Estelle's home. The sun's last glance
Was resting on this world of sin,
And giving benediction sweet
In floods of golden, glorious light,
And streaming far away to greet
The onward coming of the night.

All sorrow-laden she had walked
On down the roadway to the gate—
They met; before they knew they talked—
How long we need not here relate.
But, as she leaned upon his arm
And walked on slowly back toward home
He felt his heart grow wondrous warm;
In some strange way his thoughts would roam
To that point where Ambition rose
And said, "It can not be, and must
At once be crushed. So don't disclose
Your weakness to her simple trust."
Estelle was fair, exceeding fair,
And sorrow gave her yet more grace—
It made more golden yet her hair,
It made more pretty yet her face;
And then her voice had such a charm,
It rose and fell in cadence sweet.

And when his eye fell on her arm,
He found a model quite complete.
Thus moving on, a sudden whirl
Of wings, and then before their eyes
A young bird fell, (was it not queer?)
And, wounded, struggled hard to rise.
Estelle was touched, and said, "Poor thing,
A cruel hand has wrought thee wrong;
A bird that bears a broken wing
Can never sing its sweetest song."
And that was all; the artist knew
To-morrow he must leave, if he
Would step by step rise upward through
Temptation to art's mastery.

O-MORROW came, and he was gone;
And she—well, women can be strong.
A dream that they have dreampt upon
Until it works almost a wrong,
They yet can hide away and smile,
And none of those they chance to meet
Can ever know how they beguile
Their hearts to play such fair deceit.

HE artist stood within his room
And worked at easel long and stout.
From morning's light to evening's gloom
Fair ladies went within, without.
And one there was who often came
And watched the paintings as they grew;
And with her was a stately dame
Whose diamonds flashed upon the view.

There was no doubt but wealth was theirs ;

There was no further doubt but they
Were not so wrapped in art affairs

That oft their eyes would stray away
To where the artist, deep in thought,

Was linking dream to dream so fair
That all about him, as he wrought,
He fancied was ambrosial air.

In time he met with them and knew

They were sweet Fashion's favorite own,
Whose art levees a parvenu

Regarded as quite near the throne.
Ambition stirred anew within

His heart of hearts, as now he read
The work he need not to begin,

If he would yield but to be led.
The way was plain, the sailing clear,
The world would then all honor give ; ✓

With talent, wealth, and fashion near,
He well might think it sweet to live.

He looked his gallery round, and saw
'T was here an eye, 't was there a hand,
That seemed in some strange way to draw
His thoughts unto another land,
And mountains blue and sunny skies,
And golden locks in wavy fold,
And all the depth of blue in eyes,
And memories of the days of old.

'T was cruel to his name to dream
Of turning from this chance away.
As Fashion's favorites round did stream,
When night had intercepted day,
He felt a very lord of men,
A monarch of a little world;

And round and round, again, again,
In mazy dance his glad heart whirled.
The blazing diamonds sparkled bright,
The slippered feet in kid were clad,
And surely never revel-wight
A more enlisted partner had.
She threw her soul into the dance,
And seemed enkindled with the throng,
As foot to foot and glance to glance
Their airy figures flashed along.
But, O! there was, I can not tell,
A little something wanting yet
To win him, and to win him well,
So well that he must needs forget.

No ties now bound him to that lass,
That little country-maiden there ;
He simply met her as you pass
A rose-bush flowering in the air ;

You stop and view the roses red,
You catch the perfume with your breath,
And then you stride on straight ahead
And care not how they meet their death.
This world is all a thing of show,
And who would ride upon the crest
Must rate these finer feelings low,
And not be hampered or distress.
If birds with broken wings should fall
Before his feet with plaintive look,
He casts them from the way, that's all;
They'll find some little, hidden nook.
Thus did Ambition lure his soul
And find a reason for each act:
We go to pieces on the shoal
In fleeing from the cataract.



H! such is life; and ere we know
'T is presto! and a change is made,
And what was *this* a while ago,
Is *that* before it can be said.
And so, within that distant glen
Beneath the mountain's arching brow,
Far from the busy haunts of men,
Is maiden meditative now.
She sees the sun rise in the east,
She sees the sun set in the west,
She sees the Summer spread her feast,
And Autumn come a welcome guest.
Her daily round of duties all—
Her books, her walks, her dreams by night—
Are shadowed by an inward pall
Whose edges gleam with golden light;

For, though the face of Hope was hid,
Faith, loving maid that knows no guile,
In dreamless innocence bid
Her heart play with a wanton wile.
The flowers knew her kindly touch,
The bird's poor broken wing was healed,
The lambs all grew to love her much,
And followed faithful round the field;
The trees swung out their hands in glee,
The brooklets laughed as she passed on,
The breezes breathed in ecstasy,
The sun rays welcomed her at morn.
She taught the music now to stray
In winsome grace o'er pliant strings,
And oft she sang a roundelay
That ran into more serious things:

A Song

Ah! hope is mine, and hope is well,
And work will keep her young heart sweet;
The morn shall find me down the dell,
The night shall give me rest complete.
Ah! hope is mine, and hope is well,
And work will keep her young heart sweet.

Ah! hope is mine, and hope is well,
But clouds will linger in the sky;
I wonder if they will not swell
And burst in tempests by and by.
Ah! hope is mine, and hope is well,
But clouds will linger in the sky.

Ah! hope is mine, and hope is well,
And work will keep her young heart sweet.

I do not know, I can not tell
Which way she leads my willing feet ;
But hope is mine, and hope is well,
And work will keep her young heart sweet.

And, suiting action then to song,
She took her life up new again,
And bore it like a lark along
She by-paths of that little glen.
As chance now opened up the way,
She taught the children in the school.
(How easy is a teacher's sway
Where Love is law, and Duty, rule.)
She grew to have exalted aim ;
The saw within their little eyes,
All nicely set within its frame,
A picture of sweet Paradise ;

And knew that each pure little heart
Was in itself a costly gem,
And were it nurtured quite apart
Would stud the Master's diadem.
But man is man's supremest foe,
Though he should be his dearest friend,
And thousands league for brothers' woe
While hundreds work for better end.
The Cæsars of this cruel world
Have been the spoilers of the best
That God's dear hand has once unfurled
In every human being's breast.
Man preys upon his fellow-man,
And children in their very teens,
While learning use of *a* or *an*,
Interpolate a thousand scenes
Of Life's kaleidoscopic round
Upon the neighbor children's soul;

And thus the serpent's track is bound
By Human-life's concentric whole.
She thought if she could lead them out
And let the hills speak to them words
And airs of heaven lap them 'bout
And glad them with the songs of birds,
And there along the brooklet's banks
The story of the waters teach,
She might accord herself due thanks
For keeping them from Harm's sad reach.
So, often when the tasks were o'er,
And books were laid aside that day,
She led them gently from the door
Across the field and forest way;
She taught them of the beauties sweet
That lay on hill-side and in vale,
That fell about their very feet
And rose in joy to regale;

She told them that the human soul
Is like a wondrous mirror made,
And will reflect the half or whole,
In fuller light or deeper shade,
Of all this joyous universe,
That speaks of beauty, truth, and God,
And be the better or the worse
Upon a human will's mere nod.
If it is worn as it should be,
And kept undimmed by sin's foul breath,
It will reflect the harmony
That moves through all things—even death.
She led them then from self away,
And begged them walk with open eyes
And watch for flowers along the way,
And hand in hand ascend the rise ;
She told them earth was rich and sweet,
That God looks outward from the skies.

If man his fellow man would greet
 With warmth of heart and loving eyes,
Old Want would fold her hands and sleep,
 And Crime into a dwarf would shrink,
And Sorrow's heart would cease to weep,
 And fell Despair halt on the brink.
A great warm heart will burgeon out,
 If Faith and Charity are there,
But greed of gain is seed of doubt,
 And doubt will nurture sin and care.
It is not what we have, but are,
 That makes us happy here on earth,
And up beyond or sun or star
 Our souls are reckoned as our worth.

As air pours in a tainted room
 And sweeps the pestilence away,
And to the wan restores the bloom,
 And for the darkness gives the day,

So Nature peeps into the heart
And blows the bloom of roses in,
And swings the dusky doors apart
And sweeps away the brood of sin.

But, oh! the teacher as she taught
Yet grew and grew more lovely still,
And far the noblest work she wrought
Was this—she schooled a perfect will.
And though she sometimes dreamed "Perhaps,"
She smiled and said "God knoweth best."
And while the children conned their maps,
Her lily heart had perfect rest.



HE world had seized him, and he flung
His ardent heart into the stream ;
He rose a meteor, that now hung
In mid-air as the planets seem.
His friends were scores on scores, and they
Hung round him with a hollow glee,
And made the midnight hour like day
With song and dance and revelry.
The club-rooms gleamed with golden light,
The banquet table groaned with freight ;
To round the hour of waning night,
The wine-cup sat beside the plate.
They each had sung a little song—
They all had spoken each his speech,
The artist's breath with wine was strong,
As back he leaned with glass in reach.

Sis Song, Carpe Diem.

Brave Caecuban and Massic clear!
Horatian strains will celebrate,
With old Falernian, year by year,
Your powers to intoxicate!
But whether it be Caecuban,
Or Massic mantling to the brim,
Or glorious old Falernian,
Who drinks the deepest, here 's to him!

Oh! Bacchus wears the poplar wreath,
And Venus smiles with sweet delight:
Come! gather now out, boys, beneath
The stars that gem the brow of night,
And let us sing a roundelay
And round it up with measure trim,
And drain the wine-cup while we may,
Who drinks the deepest, here 's to him!

A merry song, come one, come all,
Let Cytherea lead the dance;
And, while the Graces are in call,
Let's bring them forth as each may chance;
And, while Apollo lends his lute
And trills for us a mystic hymn,
With glass to glass and foot to foot,
Who drinks the deepest, here's to him.

Ah! Time flies fast and soon is gone;
We buried Yesterday at night.
To-morrow will have come and flown
Almost before it seems in sight.
Then seize the day; let mirth flow on.
Our chance, for length of life is slim.
Once more, before the day shall dawn,
Who drinks the deepest, here's to him!

The seed of wine is seed of wrong,
And seed of wrong will fruit in ill;
And, though you wait the harvest long,
You may expect the harvest still.
Old Nature is a kindly dame,
And keeps her plenty on the shelf,
But she will yet assert her claim
In due time to protect herself.
Outraged, she grows terrific then,
And wreaks her vengeance manifold;
You may not coax her to her den,
You may not bribe her off with gold.
Long days the fever dread had raged,
Its ebb-tide now was setting in,
And kind attendants all presaged
That time and hope the fight would win.
As in these sluggish after-hours
He lay and languished in his bed,



There came a little bunch of flowers
In which were honey-suckles red,
And violets with eyes all blue,
And buttercups all creamy gold;
And then there burst upon his view
The memories of the days of old.
There was no word to tell the tale
Of friendship lingering through the years—
There was no plea—no storm—no gale—
No burst of passion—flood of tears;
And yet his soul was through and through
Thrilled as by hidden battery's shock;
His own sweet thoughts stormed into view,
And smote with might the desert rock.
And then he recognized as true
In all the round of life's fair things
The fairest (ah! need I tell you?)
Was where the Rappahannock springs.

And, as the days passed slowly on,
There grew upon the canvas there.
As bit by bit from morn to morn
He worked to drive away dull care.
A picture of a forest-queen,
With crown of wild flowers on her head,
High-throned on rocks—a living green
With moss whose soft plush carpeted
The tessellated floor beneath,
Which won a deeper tinge from trees
Whose locked arms longed to make bequeath
Of trysting spot to love and ease.
He caught the sun-ray's laughing light,
And locked it in her golden hair ;
He set the lily's seal of white
Upon her face and features fair :
He won the rosebud's pouting grace
And on her arching lips it grew ;

Rose petals on her cheeks found place,
And in her eyes were violets blue.
And now the dawn seemed broken sweet
In whelming freshness o'er all lands,
As ever more and more complete
Expression grew beneath his hands.
It was a picture that would stay,
A very Vulcan, if not blind,
It was a picture, I must say,
Whose canvas was the artist's mind.
For he was feeble many days,
And like a very infant weak ;
His hand with effort he could raise,
His voice almost forgot to speak.

Then came a letter. Farmer Creal
Thought rest among the mountains good,
" If he could teach himself to feel
Content with pure air and plain food ; "

And Cousin Mary (Creal's good wife)

Must add a post-script just to say

"You must come, Ed. Upon my life

We'll cure you. Yours, devoted, May."

Oh! farmers' wives are oft so kind

Up mid those dear old mountains blue,

They'll ransack all the house to find

Some better way of serving you.



WAS eventide—that holy hour

When calm invests the realms of air,
And dew brings joy unto the flower

Whose head is drooping in despair.

The stars were in the silent sky,

The soft light fell on hill and dale,

The meadow brook went purling by

The clover-blooms that filled the vale;

The fire-flies hung above the meads
Like ships of airy little sprites,
And wreathed with threads of golden beads
The dark hair of this queen of nights.
Afar, anear, there was a hush
Unbroken, save at intervals
When mock-bird stirred upon her bush
And warbled lovely madrigals.
The artist at the window-side
Reclined upon the settee's length,
Looked out upon the prospect wide
And drank with every breath new strength.
The mountains in the distance now
Were growing brighter as there rose
The moon in silence o'er their brow
And smiled upon the earth's repose.
"To-morrow," queried he, "and then?
Ah! then the Rubicon is passed;

For me as for the rest of men
The die for once and all is cast."

To-morrow woke from out of sleep
And cast her night-robcs from her breast,
And from the hill-tops tried to peep
On that sweet vale's unbroken rest;
But soon the birds with silver throat
Bade welcome to her coming feet,
And Nature added note to note
Until the chorus was complete;
The sheep stirred on the hill-tops green,
The cattle browsed beside the stream,
The milk-maid moved the cows between,
The farm-hand harnessed up his team.
The sun arose in austere pride,
And beamed upon the wakened world;
By every streamlet's laughing side
Peace's white-winged banner was unfurled;

The dew-drop on the clover-leaf
Like some pure maiden felt his breath,
His beamy joy but brought her grief,
His kiss was but the kiss of death.

The artist found himself e'er noon
Down at the widow's modest home ;
Ah ! who can stay in-doors when June
With witching smiles suggests a roam.
They made their way as long before
(Old habit is old habit still.)
From out the parlor to the door,
Then up the farm-road to the hill.
He had already told her of
The rich fulfillment of his dreams,
But now he seemed somehow to love
To dwell upon such pleasant themes ;
He spoke of how he hoped his health
Would soon allow him to return

And with new fame get greater wealth
Than he had yet essayed to earn ;
He spoke of how his city home
Was hung with pictures—all his own—
Of how his friends should often come
And spend the evenings there alone.
Now, as they wandered up the hill,
They reached a spot where great trees rise,
The breeze grew fresh and fresher still,
And bluer grew the deep blue skies.
Without forethought, Estelle now sat
(’T was such a charming scene below.)
Right on the ledge, still gazing at
The harvesters move to and fro ;
The wheat-field stretched out far and wide,
The golden grain, like inland seas,
Now flowed in ebb, now rose in tide,
Wave chasing wave as breeze chased breeze.

The bob-white whistled on the rail,
The harvesters broke into song,
And now, across the pretty vale
The wheat-shocks ranged themselves along.
The artist knew the hour was there—
The moment of supreme suspense—
His love he must at once declare
And yet could find no good pretense.
He had been brave for many things,
He had been bold at other hours,
But now his courage lost her wings
And speech seemed reft of all her powers.
It may be that he felt his life
Depended for its weal or woe
On whether she would be his wife,
Or, self-sufficient, give him “no”—
And “yes,” or “no,” he could not tell.
Had he seen less of man and man’s,

He might have guessed it very well
And trusted to his heart's sweet plans.
But he had seen a woman smile
So oft within that world without,
That *he* had grown to place a guile
Where *she* would never dream a doubt.
But little things will often give
Excuse for great wide-sweeping acts,
And empires often rise and live
On pretexts that have murdered facts.
His eye fell on the the violets blue,
The honey-suckle's breath was sweet,
And buttercups just yonder grew
Where field and neighb'ring forest meet.
A bunch of wild flowers often can,
When youth in joy is leagued with youth,
Decide the destiny of man—
Between the lines you read the truth

Or should; for up the hill they went
With strange forebodings on their part,
And down they came, and sweet content
Was coyly nestling in each heart.



WELL-BELOVED and loving home
Is God's own picture of the blest—
A spot to which, where'er we roam,
We all may turn and find sweet rest.
If, busy at his studio,
The artist worked the livelong day,
He knew the shades of night would throw
The light of home about his way.
A man's love wavers to and fro,
Yet settles down at last in strength;
A woman's love, as women go,
Is love unto love's fullest length;

And he that has it, has what he
Should value as his very soul—
A buoy that upon life's sea
Is strongest when the tempests roll ;
But, oh ! when woman's love is God's,
And sweetened by that higher good,
Its influence reaches many rods,
And consecrates a neighborhood :
She is a city on a hill—
A light that never can be hid.
Her husband feels her gentle will,
The child will love, though she forbid.
And Estelle sits at eventide
With ease and plenty all about,
And, in a little crib beside,
A baby-foot kicks in and out,
And now she bends, and with her hand
Plays with its little 'broidered gown

Or gives a kiss or ties a band
Or smooths its golden ringlets down.
It cooes and laughs and lifts its fist,
And kicks its little toes in air,
And now—what mother can resist?
She bounds with baby down the stair
And open throws the door, and then—
A kiss for her, and baby, too,
Behold the happiest now of men.
They enter, and are gone from view.

L' Envoy.

O, men that work and men that bear!
What gives you grace to work and wait?
The morning kiss upon the stair,
The evening welcome at the gate.







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